

Utah Waterfowl Advisory



Northern Shoveler



Common Goldeneye

Introduction:

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) began a preliminary study during the summer of 2005 to determine if ducks around Great Salt Lake contained mercury. This concern was based upon research findings from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&WS) that demonstrated the lake had elevated levels of methyl mercury. Archived tissue samples from three waterfowl species were taken from ducks collected in 2004 in an unrelated study being conducted by The Great Salt Lake Ecosystem Project at UDWR and Utah State University (USU). Results of that analysis promulgated a more expansive collection of seven waterfowl species for further testing. All of these data were provided to the Environmental Epidemiology Program (EEP) for review.

Advisory:

On Sept. 29, the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) issued a waterfowl consumption advisory recommending people do not eat Common Goldeneye or Northern Shoveler. The EEP completed a health consultation recommending that a consumption advisory for waterfowl harvested from the Great Salt Lake marshes be issued because of the elevated levels of mercury detected.

[An Evaluation of Mercury Concentrations in Waterfowl from the Great Salt Lake, Utah for 2004 and 2005](#)

Links:

[Press Release: High Mercury Levels Found in Two Duck Species](#)

[EPA- Health Effects of Mercury](#)

[Utah Department of Environmental Quality](#)

[Utah Division of Wildlife Resources](#)

[Mercury levels in Commercial Fish and Shellfish](#)

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